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THE
PRESENTMENT
OF THE
Grand JURY
OF
BRISTOL

At the General SESSIONS of the PEACE, &c.
Holden there, begun March 13. 1682.

*To the Right Worshipful, Thomas Elton, Esq; Mayor; The Right Worshipful
Sir John Churchill, Knight, Recorder: And the Right Worshipful, and
Worshipful, the Court of Aldermen, His Majesties Justices of the Peace now
Assembled in the General Sessions of the Peace, Court of Oyer and Terminer,
and General Gbal-delivery holden for this City, and County of the same City,
begun the 13th. day of March, in the Froe and Thirtieth Tear of His Ma-
jesties Reign, Annoque Dom. 1682.*

The Humble Presentment of the Grand Inquest.

Civ. Brisfol.

WE, the Grand Jurors for the Body of this City, and County of the same, having duly Considered the Obligation of our Oath, the Particulars of our Charge, the Nature of our Duty, and the Circumstances of this City, Have pursuant thereunto laid before this Court several Bills of Indictment of great and heinous Offences, to which, as to so many Grievances, having found your ready Concurrency for their redress, we can do no less in point of Gratitude than apply our selves unto your Worships, Humbly to acknowledge the great Happiness we do enjoy under your Care and constant Attendance on the arduous Affairs of distributive Justice, whereby we receive those Benefits of the Law which were intended for us in their first Ordination.

As for this City in relation to Unlawful Assemblies and Seditious Conventicles, so much lately frequented within the same by Men who thought their Numbers of Offenders, and Confidence in Offending, should have tired out all Prosecution, and have carried all before them; We must needs say, it is owing to the Vigilancy and Industry of the Magistrates that they are now Suppressed; for that by putting the Laws in due Execution, they have been taught, even by feeling Arguments, that the best way for their Ring-leaders (those Masters of Mis-Rule) is to March off; and the best way for their Followers is to Retract and Conform. By which they have told the World, That their great Pretence, wherewith they have so long Cheated others and one another [That Matter of Religion and Conscience was the Cause of their Separation] is nothing else but a false Suggestion, and thereby have for ever baffled their Plea of that Argument, whereby they endeavoured to baffle Justice it self, and dared the Magistrate to give them Opposition; so that now the business of the Magistrate is rendred much more easie for their future Suppression, He having only to do with them in the Plea of Obstinacy, the only surviving Argument for Non-Conformity.

We shall only in this particular make bold to repeat a short Sentence out of the Lord Keepers Speech to Serjeant Saunders, at his being made Lord Chief Justice: *The Temper of this present Age requires your Severity in Cases of Sedition; it was lately grown to that height of Insolence, and managed with that Malice, that it was thought very near*

breaking out into open Force, to the danger of the Kingdom. But by the Wise Conduct of His Majesty, with the Blessing of God, it was suffered to baffle it self by its own Extravagancy. You may expect it should now be Crusty, therefore you must be the more careful to stop the beginning of so dangerous and quick spreading a Poison, and to suppress all the Materials of Sedition: A great means toward which will be to cut off all hopes it may have of Countenance in the Courts of Justice.

And for as much as our late Recorder, Sir Robert Atkins, being Prosecuted for several Miscarriages in the Execution of his Office, hath been forced to surrender the same, We Present our Heartly Thanks to the Right Worshipful, the Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council for their Prudent Management of that Affair, and more especially for their most Happy Choice of so Worthy, so Learned, and so Loyal a Person to succeed in his room, and be our present Recorder, whose Acceptance of the said Office and Service of this City we Thankfully Commemorate, and whose Appearance on the Bench in the Execution of the same we most Heartily Congratulate.

And whereas it hath pleased our Sovereign Lord the King to grant a Writ of Habeas Corpus to be issued out against the Charter of this City, and required in short time an Answer thereunto: We do therefore, as our Duty in this station, Humbly Recommend the same to your Worships, desiring that a timely and Effectual Care may be taken in that so Considerable an Affair in such manner as may best consist with the Preservation of the good Esteem and high Respect His Majesty hath been Graciously pleased so frequently to express towards this City. And a continued Manifestation of that Dutifulness and Loyalty which we have so often professed, and do ever intend to bear towards His Most Sacred Majesty, and which may most directly tend to the future Good and Advantage of this City, and the Ancient Privileges of the same.

We Present, That there having been several Sums of Money Levied by Distresses on the Goods of several Persons Convicted of being at Unlawful Assemblies and Seditious Conventicles, which (as we are Informed) remain in several Mens Hands undisposed of, whereby the Prosecution of Offenders hath been delay'd, and His Majesties Service in that Respect obstructed. We do therefore Humbly desire that your Worships will be pleased to cause the said Moneys to be brought into Court, and distributed according as the Law hath directed, and that Care may be taken to the same purpose for the future, that so the Execution of the Laws may be encouraged, and the Proceedings of this City Vindicated in so doing.

We Present John Dowly, Robert Mansel, John Walden, John Brainton, Michael Pindar, and others, for that in January and February last past they opened their Shops, exposed Goods to Sale, and so continued to hold the Fair, called St. Paul's Fair, in Temple Parish within this City, longer than the time limited in the Charter for holding the said Fair, to the manifest Detriment of the Privileges and Liberties of this City, and the Free Burgeesses thereof.

And since the welfare of this City doth very much consist in the Advantages we receive by the River, which our Ancestors always studied to secure from all Obstructions and Damages. We therefore desire your Worships to continue the Preservation of the said River; And to that End, either to choose a Committee for inspecting the same, and from time to time to cause the Offenders in this point to be brought before your Worships, to be proceeded against as the Laws direct, or to take such other Effectual Course therein, as to your Worships shall seem most fit and expedient.

We Conclude with our Prayers that God will Bless this City with Prosperity, and the Happy Effects we have reason to promise our selves under your Worships good Management of the Government thereof. This Kingdom with Peace, and the Kings Majesty with Health and length of Days, That he may out-live the Malice of his Enemies. That no Conspiracies formed against him may prosper. That his Enemies may be clothed with Confusion, and that on his Head the Crown may Flourish. Amen.

God Save the KING.